

Message Text

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ACTION AF-07

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R 201724Z DEC 74

FM AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8918

AMEMBASSY BAMAKO

C O N F I D E N T I A L OUAGADOUGOU 2683

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PBOR, ML, UV

SUBJ: CONVERSATION WITH YUGOSLAV AMBASSADOR

1. YUGOSLAV AMBASSADOR PECAR (RESIDENT IN ACCRA) WHO WAS RESIDENT IN BAMAKO UNTIL 1972 AND IS APPARENTLY STILL ACCREDITED TO MALI, CAME TO SEE ME DECEMBER 18 TO DISCUSS BORDER DISPUTE BETWEEN MALI AND UPPER VOLTA. I FOUND HIM SURPRISINGLY WELL INFORMED ON UPPER VOLTA, BUT HE CLAIMED TO BE AN EXPERT ON MALI AND GAVE ME AN EARFUL ON MALIAN MOTIVES IN CURRENT BORDER DISPUTE. FOLLOWING IS GIST OF PECAR'S REMARKS, THE ACCURACY OF WHICH I HAVE NO WAY OF ASSESSING.

2. PRINCIPAL VILLAIN IN CURRENT BORDER DISPUTE BETWEEN MALI AND UPPER VOLTA IS MALIAN MINISTER OF DEFENSE DOUKARA WHO IS UP TO HIS NECK IN CORRUPTION, HAS MADE MILLIONS IN HIS PRESENT POSITION, AND IS DETERMINED TO REPLACE TRAORE AS CHIEF OF STATE AND PRESIDENT OF CMLN. DOUKARA HAS ACTIVE SUPPORT OF FRENCH AMBASSADOR IN BAMAKO WHOM PECAR DESCRIBED AS A "DANGEROUS MACHIAVELLIAN DEVIL." DECISION TO SEND MALIAN TROOPS TO VOLTAN BORDER IN MID-NOVEMBER WAS TAKEN BY DOUKARA WHEN TRAORE WAS OUT OF THE COUNTRY AND PRESIDENT UPON HIS RETURN WAS FACED WITH "FAIT CONFIDENTIAL

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ACCOMPLI" WHICH HE RELUCTANTLY ACCEPTED. DOUKARA'S

REASONING IS THAT, IN FACE OF MALI'S MILITARY SUPERIORITY, UPPER VOLTA WILL BE FORCED TO ACCEPT MALIAN OCCUPATION OF DISPUTED AREA AND THIS WILL ENHANCE HIS IMAGE WHICH HAS BEEN TARNISHED BY CHARGES OF CORRUPTION.

3. COMMENT: I COULD NOT PINPOINT EXACTLY WHAT ROLE FRENCH AMBASSADOR IN BAMAKO WAS SUPPOSED TO BE PLAYING IN CURRENT CONFLICT BEYOND REMARK THAT HE WAS WORKING CLOSELY WITH DOUKARA AGAINST TRAORE. I DO NOT KNOW WHETHER ABOVE INFORMATION IS USEFUL TO EMBASSY BAMAKO AND/OR DEPARTMENT BUT I REPORT IT FOR WHAT IT IS WORTH.
GRAHAM

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